Capitol Punishment . .

Is There a Red China?

P nk 3/3/M *By Art Buchwald*

ONE OF THE most astounding discoveries in history was made the other day when a group of American State Department people found a new country named Red China. For years there had been rumors that there was a country in the Far East with a population of 800 million people. Yet no one in the United States would believe it.

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But an expedition of Senators led, by Marco Fulbright came across it accidentally while looking for a new route to North Vietnam.

When the existence of Red China was reported, a meeting of all the top policy people in the State Department was called.

"If this is true," said one of the Assistant Secretaries, "that means the world is round."

"Hogwash," said another Secretary. "We all know there is a country called China already, so how could there be another China? Look at our maps. China is right here in the Taiwan Strait."

"That's right," a Secretary said. "And our maps are all up to date."

"What's that large land mass across the water from it?" someone asked.

"It's marked 'unexplored.'"

"Perhaps that's where Red China is."

"I'm an old China hand, and I say there is no place called Red China. The only China is located on the island of Taiwan."

"WHAT PROOF do we have that there really is a country with 800 million people in it, except for the word of a few disgruntled Senators?" an Under Secretary demanded. "They're only trying to discredit our foreign policy anyway."

"There is no proof," a Far East expert said, "except the West Germans have announced they plan to build a $150 million steel mill there. I don't think they'd put in that kind of money if the country didn't exist."

The Secretary of State spoke up. "That is a point. The only thing I can't understand is how we could have missed it all these years."

"Perhaps there is a cloud cover over it all the time," someone suggested.

"Does the CIA have anything on it?"

"No, sir. They're as much in the dark as we are. The French, the British and the Canadians have all reported that they believe there is a Red China, but the Russians now claim it isn't there."

The old China hand spoke up. "Mr. Secretary, I believe we're only looking for trouble by following up the rumor. We already have a China. It's *our* kind of China. Another China would only mean trouble."

"But," said one of the other men, "if the reports are true that this land mass contains 800 million people, won't we have to deal with it sooner or later? I think we should announce that we don't believe there is a Red China, but if there is, we intend to contain it, but not isolate it."

THE SECRETARY of State said, "That's a good phrase, 'containment but not isolation.' I think I'll use it in my next news conference. Our only problem is that if we admit there is such a place we might be forced to admit her into the United Nations."

"Precisely, sir," a Secretary spoke out. "Besides, we've told the American people for 17 years that there is no Red China. If we admit there is a Red China now, we would only confuse them."

One of the advisers said, "Seventeen years ago the American people didn't believe in flying saucers, either. Perhaps we could announce the existence of Red China and flying saucers at the same time."

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